

William C. Rives Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2013

Contact information: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact>

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm77037937>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms014041>

Prepared by Manuscript Division Staff

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2014

Collection Summary

Title: William C. Rives Papers

Span Dates: 1674-1939

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1830-1890)

ID No.: MSS37937

Creator: Rives, William C. (William Cabell), 1793-1868

Extent: 50,400 items

Extent: 172 containers

Extent: 68 linear feet

Extent: 7 microfilm reels

Language: Collection material in English

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm77037937>

Summary: U.S. senator and representative from Virginia. Correspondence, journals, diaries, draft of Rives's incomplete "Life and Time of James Madison," and drafts of speeches, novels, and an unpublished autobiography by Rives. Includes papers of Thomas Walker (1715-1794), U.S. Army officer, guardian of Thomas Jefferson, physician, and explorer; and of Walker's son, Francis (1764-1806), U.S. representative and lawyer from Virginia.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Barbour, James, 1775-1842--Correspondence.

Campbell, David, 1779-1859--Correspondence.

Cooper, James Fenimore, 1789-1851--Correspondence.

Everett, Edward, 1794-1865--Correspondence.

Fillmore, Millard, 1800-1874--Correspondence.

Hamilton, James, Jr., 1786-1857--Correspondence.

Harrison, William Henry, 1773-1841--Correspondence.

Hoops, Adam, 1709-1771--Correspondence.

Jackson, Andrew, 1767-1845--Correspondence.

Jackson, Andrew, 1767-1845.

Jackson, Robert, approximately 1710--approximately 1764--Correspondence.

Jefferson, Peter, 1708-1757--Estate.

Jefferson, Thomas, 1743-1826--Correspondence.

Lafayette, Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier, marquis de, 1757-1834--Correspondence.

Lawrence, Abbott, 1792-1855--Correspondence.

Legaré, Hugh Swinton, 1797-1843--Correspondence.

Lewis, Andrew, 1720-1781--Correspondence.

Lewis, William Berkeley, 1784-1866--Correspondence.

Madison, Dolley, 1768-1849--Correspondence.

Madison, James, 1751-1836--Correspondence.

Madison, James, 1751-1836.

Mason, J. M. (James Murray), 1798-1871--Correspondence.

Monroe, James, 1758-1831--Correspondence.

Niles, Nathaniel, Jr., 1791-1869--Correspondence.

Pendleton, Edmund, 1721-1803--Correspondence.

Reeve family.

Ritchie, Thomas, 1778-1854--Correspondence.

Rives family.

Rives, William C. (William Cabell), 1793-1868.

Rives, William C. (William Cabell), 1793-1868. History of the life and times of James Madison. 1868-1873.
Tyler, John, 1790-1862--Correspondence.
Van Buren, Martin, 1782-1862--Correspondence.
Walker, Francis, 1764-1806. Francis Walker papers.
Walker, Thomas, 1715-1794. Thomas Walker papers.
Washington, George, 1732-1799--Correspondence.
Webster, Daniel, 1782-1852--Correspondence.
Winthrop, Robert C. (Robert Charles), 1809-1894--Correspondence.

Organizations

Dismal Swamp Canal Company.
Loyal Land Company.
Whig Party (U.S.)

Subjects

Indians of North America--Government relations.
Indians of North America--Ohio.
Land speculation--Kentucky.
Land speculation--Virginia.
Plantations--Virginia.
Reconstruction (U.S. history, 1865-1877)
Slavery--United States.

Places

Augusta County (Va.)--Surveys.
Fort Pitt (Pa.)--History.
France--Foreign relations--United States.
Southern States--Politics and government.
United States--Foreign relations--France.
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.
United States--History--French and Indian War, 1754-1763.
United States--Politics and government--1783-1865.
Virginia--Commerce.
Virginia--History--French and Indian War, 1754-1763.
Virginia--Politics and government--1775-1865.
Virginia--Surveys.

Occupations

Lawyers.
Representatives, U.S. Congress--Virginia.
Senators, U.S. Congress--Virginia.

Provenance

The papers of William Cabell Rives, U.S. senator and representative from Virginia, were deposited in the Library of Congress in 1928, 1929, 1940, and 1941 by Mrs. Helen M. Rhinelander and converted to a gift in 1946. Some materials were transferred to the James Madison Papers in the Library in 1958.

Processing History

The papers of William C. Rives were processed in 1963. The finding aid was revised in 2013.

Additional Guides

A working index of selected correspondents in the Rives Papers is available as a [PDF](#) document.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of William C. Rives is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The papers of William C. Rives are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Microfilm

A microfilm edition of part of these papers is available on seven reels. Consult reference staff in the Manuscript Division concerning availability for purchase or interlibrary loan. To promote preservation of the originals, researchers are required to consult the microfilm edition.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, William C. Rives Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

William C. Rives

Date	Event
1793, May 4	Born, Amherst County, Va.
1809	Graduated, William and Mary College, Williamsburg, Va.
1817-1821	Representative from Nelson County to Virginia House of Delegates
1819	Married Judith Page Walker
1822	Representative from Albermarle County to Virginia House of Delegates
1823-1829	Member, U.S. House of Representatives
1829	Appointed minister to France
1832	Elected to U.S. Senate
1849-1853	Minister to France
1861-1862	Member of Confederate Congress
1868, Apr. 25	Died at "Castle Hill," Albermarle County, Va.

Thomas Walker

1715, Jan. 25	Born, King and Queen County, Va.
1741	Married Mildred Thornton Meriwether, acquiring eleven thousand acres in Albermarle County, Va.
1748	Explored southern end of Virginia valley
1749	Appointed chief agent, Loyal Land Co.
1750	Explored lands for Loyal Land Co., west of Virginia into Kentucky

1752	Elected to House of Burgesses; relinquished seat when later appointed deputy surveyor of Augusta County, Va.
1755	Appointed commissary-general to Virginia troops under George Washington; present at General Edward Braddock's defeat
1756-1761	Represented Hampshire County in House of Burgesses
1761	Represented Albermarle County in House of Burgesses
1765	Built "Castle Hill" estate in Albermarle County, Va.
1768	Represented Virginia at the First Treaty of Fort Stanwix
1775	Commissioner in negotiations with Ohio Indians at Fort Pitt
1776	Member, Virginia Committee of Safety; later, a member of the new state government's executive council
1779	Headed Virginia commission to survey and extend Virginia-North Carolina boundary to the west
1774, Nov. 9	Died at "Castle Hill," Albermarle, County, Va.

Francis Walker

1764, June 22	Born at "Castle Hill," Albermarle County, Va.
1787	Opened law practice in Louisa County, Va.
1788-1791	Served in Virginia House of Delegates
circa 1790	Appointed agent, Loyal Land Co.
1793-1795	Member, Third United States Congress
1797-1801	Served in Virginia House of Delegates
1806, Mar.	Died at "Castle Hill," Albermarle, County, Va.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of William Cabell Rives (1793-1868) span the years 1674-1939, with the greater part dated between 1830 and 1890. The collection consists of diaries, correspondence, writings, financial records, printed matter, and miscellaneous material and is organized into eleven series: [Diaries](#) ; [Journals](#) ; [Letterbooks](#) ; [Bound Correspondence](#) ; [Family Correspondence](#) ; [General Correspondence](#) ; [Speech, Article, and Book File](#) ; [Financial File](#) ; [Scrapbooks](#) ; [Miscellany](#) ; and [Thomas and Francis Walker Papers](#) .

The papers include [Journals](#) and [Diaries](#) kept by various members of the Rives family and a large group of [family letters](#) dated from 1817 through 1939. The non-family [correspondence](#) , covering the years 1674-1909, contains letters of political and diplomatic significance reflecting on Southern politics, Jacksonianism, the Whig political movement, diplomatic relations with France, slavery, the Civil War, and Reconstruction. The collection also includes a draft of *The History of the Life and Times of James Madison*, an uncompleted biography by Rives published between 1868 and 1873, as well as drafts of an unpublished autobiography, his speeches, novels, and other writings.

Prominent among Rives's correspondents were James Barbour, David Campbell, James Fenimore Cooper, Edward Everett, Millard Fillmore, James Hamilton, Jr., William Henry Harrison, Andrew Jackson, Thomas Jefferson, Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette, Abbott Lawrence, Hugh Swinton Legaré, William Berkeley Lewis, Dolley Madison, James Madison, J. M. Mason, James Monroe, Nathaniel Niles, Thomas Ritchie, John Tyler, Martin Van Buren, Daniel Webster, and Robert C. Winthrop.

The papers of Thomas Walker (1715-1794), physician, explorer, merchant, army officer, guardian of Thomas Jefferson, and grandfather of Rives's wife, Judith Page Walker, and his son Francis Walker (1764-1806), lawyer and United States representative, have been separately arranged as the final series of the Rives collection. The [Walker papers](#) span the years 1744-1835. The majority of these fall between the years 1760 and 1795.

Of major interest among these papers are the journal kept by Thomas Walker during his exploration of the Loyal Land Company's holdings in 1750; correspondence between Jefferson and the elder Walker, as well as accounts, concerning the administration of Peter Jefferson's estate; a large number of accounts, invoices, and receipts bearing on Walker's service as

commissary-general to Virginia troops under Washington and William Byrd, in 1755 and 1760-1762; and the other report of the Virginia commissioners on negotiations with the Ohio Indians at Fort Pitt in 1775.

The General Correspondence is fairly evenly divided between letters to the elder Walker and to his son. The correspondence of Thomas Walker spans the period from 1745 into the early 1790's, bearing chiefly on his activities as a merchant and land speculator; that of Francis Walker is concentrated between 1790 and 1795, concerning legal and family affairs. Chief correspondents include Adam Hoops, Robert Jackson, Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Lewis, James Madison, James Monroe, Edmund Pendleton, and George Washington.

Over three-fourths of the Walker papers are of a financial nature, chiefly accounts, invoices, and receipts. In addition to the Jefferson and commissary accounts of Thomas Walker, these items also include many items pertaining to his activities as a planter and merchant. There are several items bearing on the affairs of the Loyal Land Company and the Dismal Swamp Canal Company, land ventures with which both Walkers were associated.

Of note in the Miscellany series are the surveyor's notebooks and plats made by Thomas Walker, chiefly from his tenure as deputy surveyor of Augusta County, Virginia. Also included are printed items apparently used by Francis Walker during his term as United States representative from Virginia.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in eleven series:

- Diaries, 1847-1889
- Journals, 1829-1886
- Letterbooks, 1814-1920
- Correspondence, 1776-1890
- Family Correspondence, 1817-1939
- General Correspondence, 1674-1909
- Speech, Article, and Book File
- Financial File, 1815-1900
- Scrapbooks, 1820-1907
- Miscellany
- Thomas Walker and Francis Walker Papers, 1744-1835

Description of Series

Container	Series
BOX 1-11	<p><u>Diaries, 1847-1889</u> Diaries of various members of the Rives family. Arranged chronologically by year.</p>
BOX 12-14	<p><u>Journals, 1829-1886</u> Journals of various members of the Rives family. Arranged chronologically by year.</p>
BOX 15-19	<p><u>Letterbooks, 1814-1920</u> Diplomatic and personal letterbooks of various members of the Rives family. Arranged chronologically by year.</p>
BOX 20	<p><u>Correspondence, 1776-1890</u> Transcripts of letters received by Rives (1811-1833, 1837-1865, and 1890-1867) as well as copies of letters of prominent individuals such as George Washington, and Patrick Henry. Arranged chronologically.</p>
BOX 21-41	<p><u>Family Correspondence, 1817-1939</u> Letters sent and received . Arranged chronologically by year.</p>
BOX 42-99	<p><u>General Correspondence, 1674-1909</u> Letters sent and received. Arranged chronologically by month.</p>
BOX 100-121	<p><u>Speech, Article, and Book File</u> Drafts and holograph copies of addresses, novels, miscellaneous writings, and biographies of James Madison and William C. Rives. Arranged by type of writing and author.</p>
BOX 122-131	<p><u>Financial File, 1815-1900</u> Account books, cash books, bills, receipts, and miscellaneous items. Arranged chronologically by year.</p>
BOX 132-136	<p><u>Scrapbooks, 1820-1907</u> Volumes of newspaper clippings. Arranged chronologically with overlapping between volumes.</p>
BOX 137-160	<p><u>Miscellany</u> Address books, armorial bearings, autographs, bibliographical and estate materials, college lecture notes, commissions, commonplace books, diplomatic miscellany, legal papers, maps, memoranda, newspaper clippings, notes, photographs, printed matter, transcripts, visiting cards, and miscellaneous items. Arranged by topic or type of material.</p>

BOX 161-167

Thomas Walker and Francis Walker Papers, 1744-1835

Journals, diaries, memorandum books, correspondence, accounts and financial material, printed matter, surveyor's notebooks and plats, and miscellaneous items. *Available on microfilm, shelf no. 14,983*

Arranged by type of material.

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Family Correspondence, 1817-1939

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General Correspondence, 1674-1909

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Speech, Article, and Book File

Container

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Thomas Walker and Francis Walker Papers, 1744-1835

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